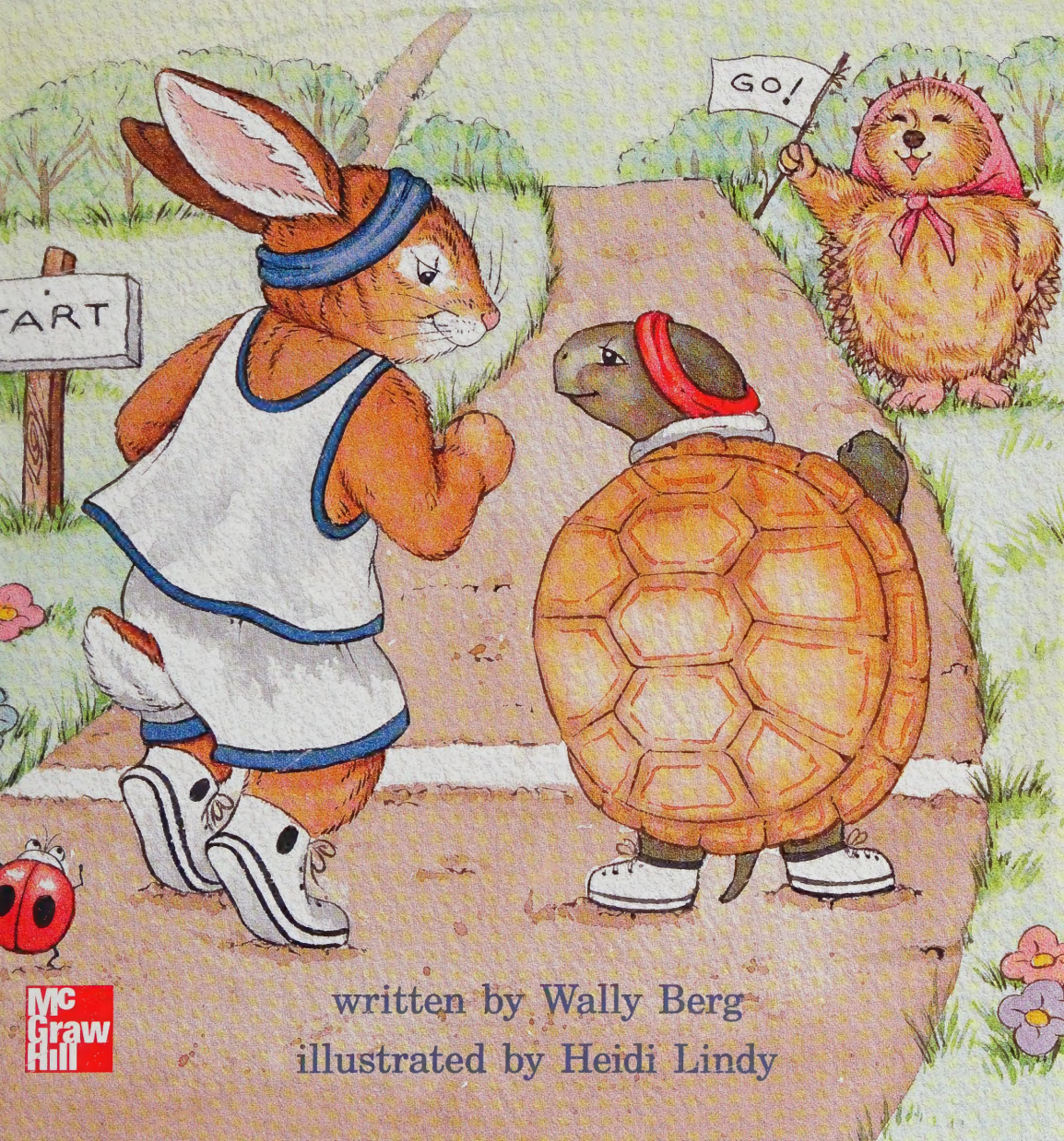




# HARE and TORTOISE



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written by Wally Berg  
illustrated by Heidi Lindy




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# HARE and TORTOISE



written by Wally Berg  
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New York

**McGraw-Hill  
School Division**

Farmington





Hare is a very fast animal and everybody in the forest knows it. Squirrel knows it, and Mole knows it. Field Mouse knows it, and Vole knows it. Even cranky old Hedgehog knows it.





If the other animals forget, though, Hare reminds them.

“Who’s the fastest one around?” he asks. “Do I have to jog your memory?” Then he laughs at his joke as he dashes away.

Hare is not happy just being fast. What really makes him happy is to be able to brag about it. He thinks he’s wonderful.





Whenever Hare meets another animal, he says, “Hey, buddy. Watch this.”

Then he does a little speedy dance, like a silly monkey. He finishes by shoving one of his big fast feet at the other animal. “Want to race, buddy?” he asks.

Nobody ever does. They all know the hare can beat them easily.





One day, the other animals decided that they had had enough of Hare's funny stuff. "One of us has to agree to race him," said Hedgehog.

"Well, not me," said Shrew.

"Me neither," said Badger.

"Not for all the money in the world," said Squirrel.

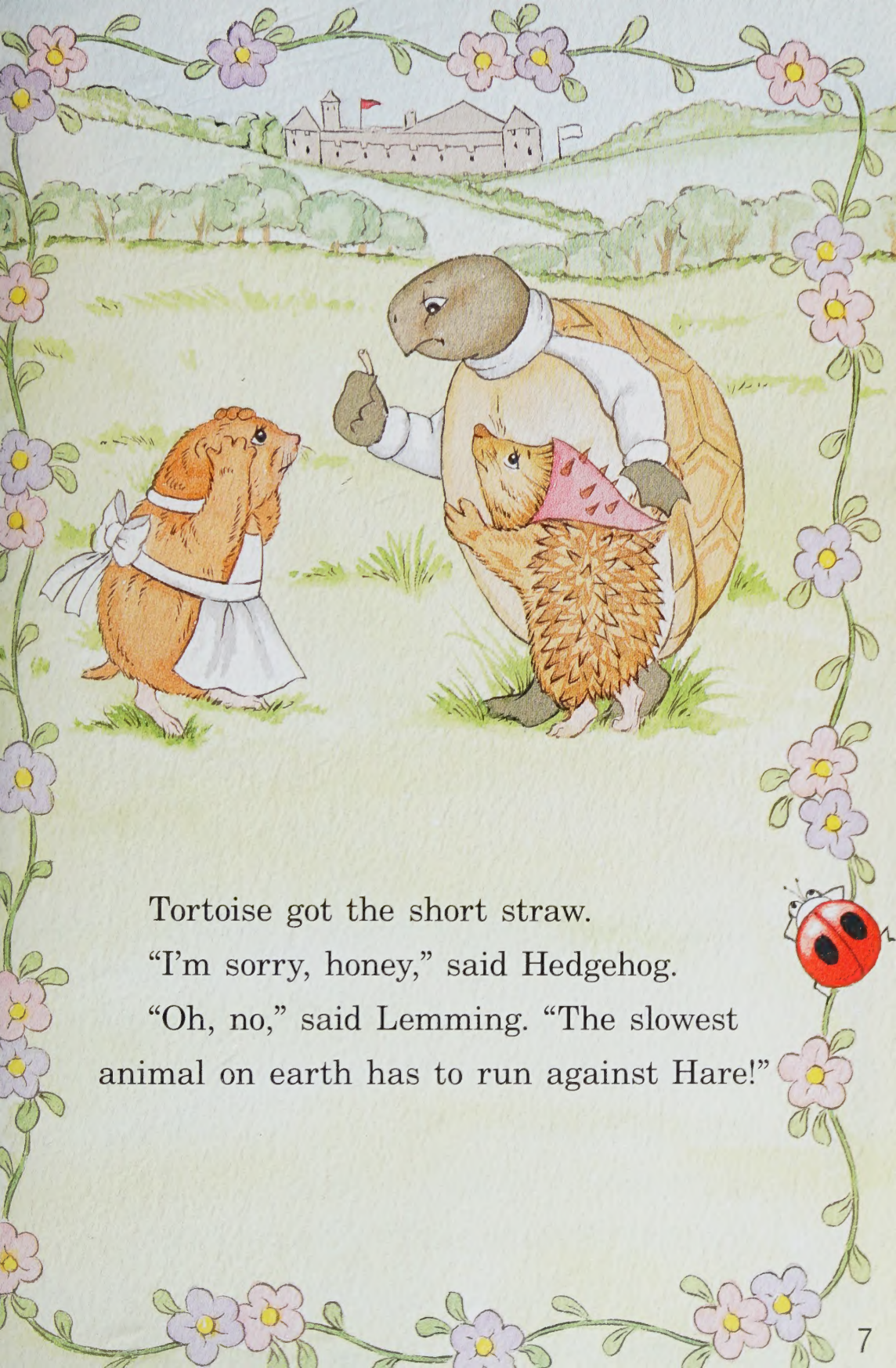




“We’ll draw straws,” said Hedgehog.  
“The animal with the shortest straw  
must race.”

She bent down and picked up a  
handful of sticks. She tore one stick, so  
that it was much shorter than the  
others. Then she held the whole bunch so  
that only the tops were sticking out. The  
animals could not tell which was the  
tiny straw. One by one they chose.





Tortoise got the short straw.

"I'm sorry, honey," said Hedgehog.

"Oh, no," said Lemming. "The slowest animal on earth has to run against Hare!"

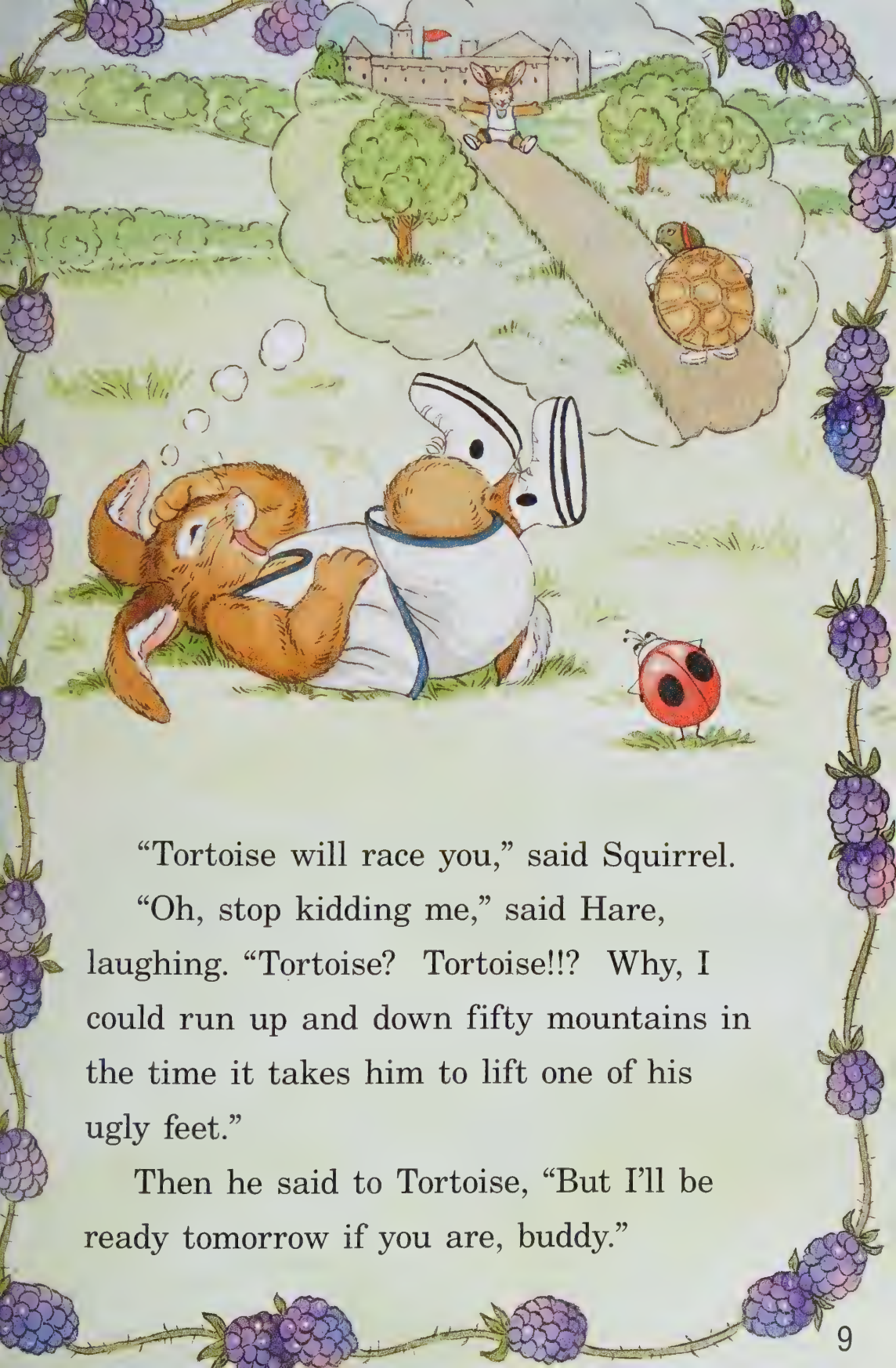




Just then Hare came by. "Hey, what's everybody doing here? I was lonely in the forest by myself."

He shoved his foot at Tortoise. "Anybody want to race?" he asked.





“Tortoise will race you,” said Squirrel.

“Oh, stop kidding me,” said Hare, laughing. “Tortoise? Tortoise!!? Why, I could run up and down fifty mountains in the time it takes him to lift one of his ugly feet.”

Then he said to Tortoise, “But I’ll be ready tomorrow if you are, buddy.”





The next morning, all the animals gathered to watch Hare and Tortoise race.

“Poor Tortoise,” whispered Frog to Shrew. “I wish there was some way for him to win. That Hare makes me hopping mad.”

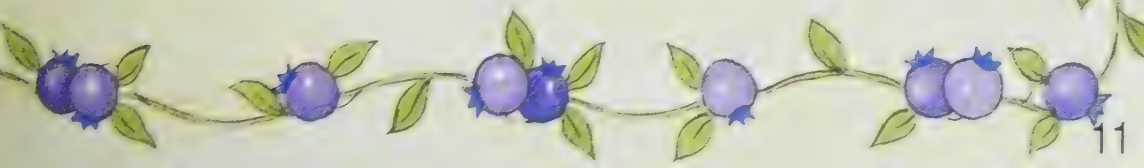




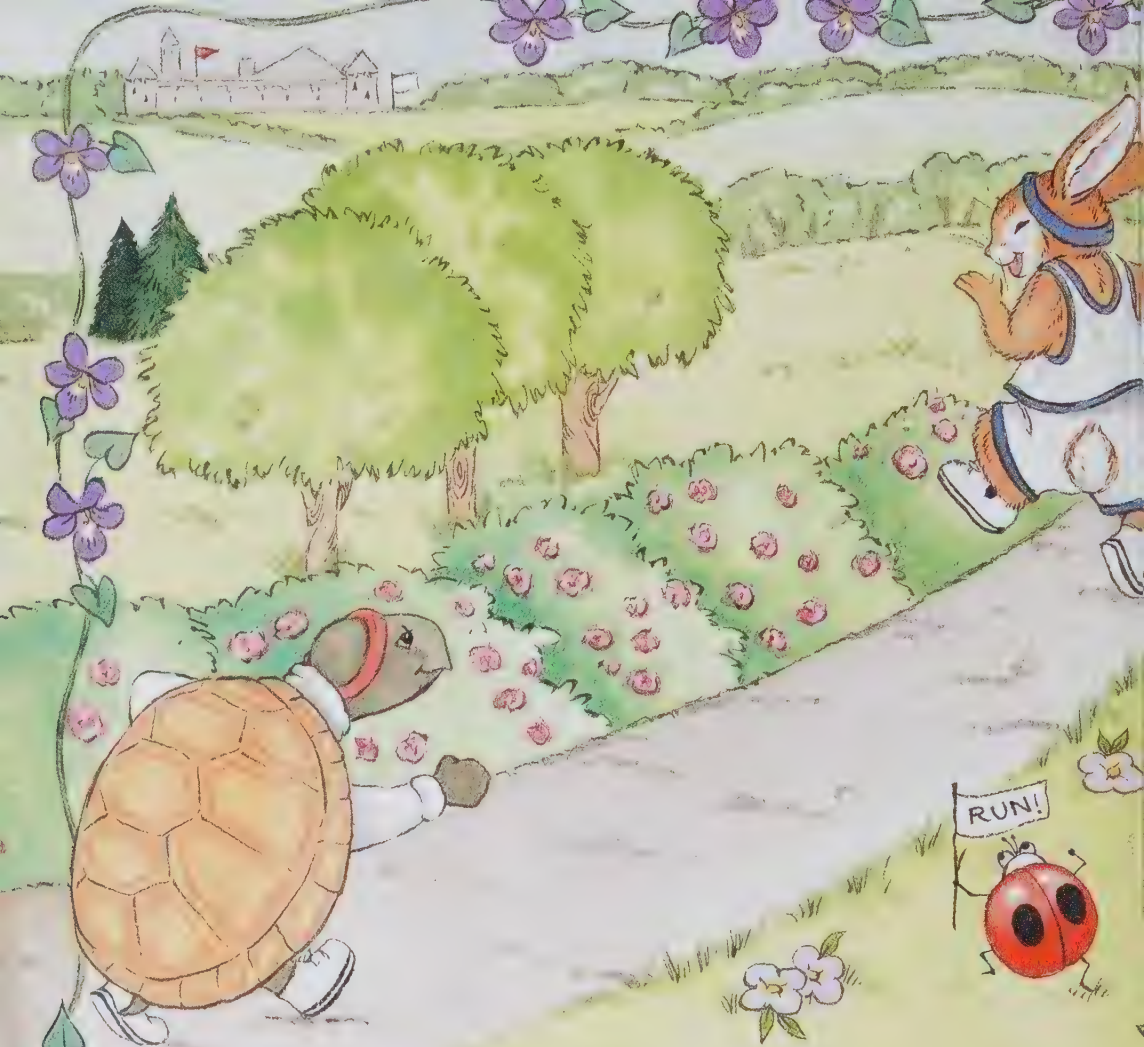
Tortoise thought, "Oh, why did I get the shortest straw? This heavy shell on my back makes me the slowest animal in the forest. I always have to carry my house with me. I'll try my best, but how on earth can I win?"

Hare thought, "This is great. How can I lose?"

Hedgehog said, "Get ready. Get set. Go!"







After just a few minutes, Hare was way ahead. The race was easy for him. Maybe it was a little too easy.

“I can win this thing in my sleep,” he said to himself, chuckling.

Then he yawned. “Speaking of sleep, I guess I’m getting sleepy because I’m so bored. I think I’ll stop for a short nap.”





Hare leaned against a tree, closed his eyes, and began to snooze.

Tortoise continued to try hard. He was so busy running that he did not even notice Hare had stopped.





When Tortoise got to the finish line, he figured that Hare must have reached it long ago.

So he was surprised to hear everybody cheering.





The cheering woke up Hare. He sat up under the tree, and stared down the track.

“Oh, no,” he said, and smacked himself in the head. “I slept through the whole silly race. Tortoise won!”





Hare shook Tortoise's hand.

"Do you want to race again, buddy?"

Hare asked.

"Not today," said Tortoise. "Now it's my turn for a nap. I earned it."



## **Story Questions and Activity**

1. How do the animals decide who will race against Hare?
2. Why doesn't Hare win?
3. In real life, animals can't talk, and they don't act like the ones in this story. Do these animals remind you of anyone you know?
4. What is the story mostly about?
5. Do any of the animals in this story act like any of the animals in *Nine-in-One*, *Grr*, *Grr*?

## **An Animal's Home Is Its Castle**

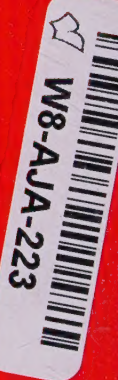
In some of the pictures in this book you can see a castle. Choose two of the animal characters in this book and draw a picture of the house you think they might have. Write a short paragraph about how the houses are alike and different.





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